
We hope that this will aid you in making an informed decision and to understand the terminology associated with lenses.

Single Vision Lenses

These lenses have one focal point. They can be used for driving, computer use, or reading. After age 45 you may require more than one set of lenses for different visual tasks.

Multifocal Lenses

These lenses have more than one focal point. This can be found in lined bifocals, lined trifocals, or in progressive lenses.

Lined multifocals

These have 2 (bifocals) or 3 (trifocals) focal points. Typically, they are designed for your distance and reading vision (bifocals) or for distance, intermediate, and reading vision (trifocals). They can also be designed for intermediate and reading (eg. computer distance in the top half and desktop distance in bottom half). They have a wider field of view, however, because of the line; they have a limited range in depth of focus.

Progressive lenses

Also known as no-line bifocals. These allow for distance, intermediate, and near vision. They are ground in such way that there is no line in the lenses, but in order to do this, there are peripheral distortions in the lenses. This cannot be avoided. As a result, they offer a greater range in vision but a narrower field of view. Some types of newer digitally surfaced progressive lenses offer a wider field of view. These lenses are often confused with Transitions lenses.

Plastic vs. Glass vs. Polycarbonate

Most lenses used today are plastic lenses. Plastic offers the best combination of strength, scratch resistance, and cost. Glass lenses are the most scratch resistant but the least impact resistant. Glass is also the heaviest material. Polycarbonate is used in true safety glasses. It is the softest material which makes it the most impact resistant, but this same characteristic allows it to scratch very easily.

High Index

This refers to how much a material will bend light. Higher index lenses will bend light more, allowing for thinner and lighter lenses. Typically any prescription over +/- 3.00 we will recommend a higher index material. Any prescription over +/- 4.00 we strongly encourage you to consider a higher index material in order to avoid thick and heavy lenses.

Anti-Reflective Coatings

This will reduce the amount of glare or reflections that come off of oncoming traffic, overhead lighting, computer screens, etc. It will allow you to see more comfortably. We recommend an anti-reflective coating if you use your glasses for driving. There are several different types of anti-reflective coatings. The newer coatings have anti-static characteristics which will make them much easier to clean with less smudges. However, you will still need to clean your glasses.

Transitions or Photochromatic Lenses

These will change color in response to UV exposure. In direct UV, these lenses will darken (e.g. outdoors). With indirect UV, they will darken, but not as much (e.g. in a vehicle). They return to clear when indoors. These lenses typically darken very quickly and take longer to lighten up. As they age (after 2-3 years) they become less chemically active and they do not turn as light or as dark. This is normal. Also, cold weather can affect how chemically active they are. If you are looking for dark glasses for driving purposes, you will probably not like these lenses as they do not darken as much in a vehicle. These lenses are often confused with progressive lenses.